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WAYSIDE NOTES.

An Interesting Trip to Prominent Points
in the San Miguel Valley, Sonora.

At Tuape I received a cordial welcome from Mr. James G. Chism, who has been engaged in business in that place seventeen years. Originally from California Mr. Chism went to Tombstone when that great camp was in the hey day of its prosperity. He was employed by one of the mining companies there as a blacksmith. Thence he went to Santa Elena; in the employ of the company which bought that great gold mine from General Pesqueira. After two or three years with them he located at Tuape and engaged in merchandising. He is also heavily interested in agriculture and cattle growing and has been interested in one or two successful mining deals. He was interested with Doctor Alderman and Mr. Spires in the Klondike sale, and the fortunate buyers are assured of a bonanza. Many of the fine ranches up and down the river both ways from Tuape are the property of Mr. C. and those cultivating them work upon shares, although several of the best he manages personally. Beside his own crop Mr. Chism buys from the small farmers along the river, and his tenants and ships to Terrenate and Hermosillo each season about 3,000 fanegas of wheat. A fanega is 180 pounds. He has at Tuape a small flour mill with which he does custom work for the small ranchers.

Cultivation of sugar cane and manufacture of "panocha" was once a great industry along the San Miguel river, but removal of the state duty has made it possible for Sinaloa sugar producers to undersell at Guaymas and Hermosillo the product of this part of the country, and as a consequence only sufficient "panocha" for home consumption is now produced. In former times Rayon was a great sugar producing section, and Mr. Chism informs me that the output of "panocha" annually produced in that vicinity reached the handsome value of \$100,000.

Another old resident at Tuape is Doctor Em Alderman who has been there about fourteen years. Previous to that time he practiced medicine at Ures and elsewhere in Sonora.

Fortunate sales of good mining properties he had denounced have placed him "on Easy street," and he practices now only as a matter of accommodation. Doctor Alderman is a native of Pennsylvania, and was brought up in Ohio. Coming west many years ago he located in the practice of his profession at

Tucson, where he resided several years.

Sunday morning Mr. Chism showed me about the town, which is small villa of about 600 people. The principal point of interest is an old church dating fully 200 years back. The building is of goodly size, of adobe, and is not in the very best repair. Adjacent to that structure are crumbling mounds of adobes which Mr. C. informed me were the ruins of what was once a large convent, the home of a large number of nuns. In front of the church, hanging to a parallel bar set upon two uprights, are three old, copper bells, the largest bearing the year of its casting—1699. It is wonderfully clear and pure in tone. The mine from which the copper in these bells was extracted lies in the mountains not far eastward from the town.

At Tuape I learned that another mining deal of importance has recently been made by Doctor Alderman, who has sold to the Washington people who own the Cerro Prieto property two mines in the mountains east from Tuape. They are named the Nacimiento and La Llave. La Llave has a big ledge of ore bearing gold and silver, and the other mine has a small ledge, running very high in values in the same metals. Already a force of men is doing development work, and a mill will be erected to reduce the ores. It was to attend business of a legal nature in connection with this deal that Doctor Alderman was upon his way to Ures when I met him. The new company which has been formed to take over and work these properties is called the Richfield Mining Company. The directors are Hon. Jesse B. Willson, Judge R. E. Doan. Manager J. A. Cooper and Mr. J. W. Briggs of Washington, D. C., and Mr. James G. Chism of Tuape. The properties are considered of the very best description, and the new owners are believed to have secured a bonanza.

Mr. Lauro Morales of Ures also owns a number of fine farms along the San Miguel river.

From Opodepe I made the return journey to Copete Monday without incident or anything worthy of note.

My trip had taken me along about forty miles of the valley of the San Miguel river, a very fine region. The point where I entered it is about fifteen miles above Carbonera, the place where I visited Mr. C. S. Mills, the day preceding my outset for the trip up the river. Southward from Carbonera the river flows to a junction with the Sonora river, a few miles from Her-

mosillo, passing in its course the towns of Horcasitas, Los Angeles and Pesqueira. At Los Angeles is the big cotton mill of G. Moller & Co. Sucs., of Guaymas. The headwaters of the river are upon the south slope of the Cananea mountains, about sixty miles above Tuape, beyond which place are two towns Cucurpe and Dolores. In the mountains in the vicinity of the first named town are three good mining camps—the Cucurpe, owned by people from the State of Washington; Cerro Prieto, where Washington, D. C. capitalists have a good property upon which they have erected a 20-stamp mill—it is reported that they intend increasing the capacity to 100-stamps—and the Klondyke camp where the Empora Mining Co. (Mr. J. F. Tener and associates) are developing a very valuable property.

All the way from Dolores to the mouth of the San Miguel, the valley is susceptible of a very high state of cultivation, and there are many fine ranches. Near Pesqueira Don Victor Aguilar, state treasurer, owns a very fine property of many thousand acres, which he is developing to a high state of perfection. Mr. Aguilar has driven a number of wells for irrigation, in all of which the water rises close to the surface, and from one it flows over plainly demonstrating that the flow is artesian. Experts declare that strong flows of artesian water would be developed by drilling to a lower water strata than that cut by Mr. Aguilar.

The Sonora railway enters the valley of the San Miguel near Pesqueira station. The line of the railway leaves the line valley at Santa Ana, and passing Llano, Querobabi, Posa, Carbo and Selva traverses a broad plain between the two rivers. This plain comprises millions of acres of rich, fertile soil, susceptible of the widest, most varied and profitable agricultural production in the world. All that vast plain will one day be under cultivation, irrigated from the artesian flow beneath.

Tuesday morning I took the stage from Copete to Carbo, and reached the latter place in the afternoon, terminating another very pleasant trip in Sonora and another batch of Wayside Notes, which can be appropriately closed with an expression of thanks to Messrs Hardwick, Mills, Vasabilbaso, Chism and others along the way for hospitalities extended and services rendered.

I visited all of Sunday morning with Mr. Chism, and when I bade him "goodbye" after dinner I had in my pocket a handsome contract

for a "write up" in the forthcoming special illustrated edition of THE OASIS.

My return journey to Opodepe was without interest. I stopped over night with Mr. Manuel Vasavilbaso, and obtained from him no small amount of information about the surrounding region.

Mr. Vasavilbaso has been located at Opodepe eight years and is engaged in merchandising, cattle raising and the production of mescal. His stock rancho is in the mountains about seven miles west of the town, and is supplied with water from a big spring at the summit, two miles farther west. The water is piped to the branding pens through an eighteen inch pipe, and is sufficient in volume to supply all the wants of several thousand head of cattle. They come from all parts of the range to the watering troughs at the home rancho, which is in a very beautiful little valley.

The mescal production of Mr. Vasavilbaso ranks with the heaviest in Sonora, but three others beside paying the same [first class license] He has 800 acres of land cultivated to the magey plant, and beside gathers large quantities of wild magey, having an exclusive concession to do so from the owners of large land grants covering a great area. He has two vinaterias, one at the plantation, the other near town. The former, and larger, produces "vino", the first distillation, the other, "bacanora", the second distillation. His monthly output is some 3,000 gallons and meets with a wide sale, depositories in Guaymas, Hermosillo, Nogales and Tucson, disposing of the goods. Additional depositories will be shortly established at Naco, Douglas and Bisbee.

At Opodepe there is also engaged in merchandising Mr. Julius Bounan a gentleman well and widely known in Sonora and Arizona.

A salient point of interest at Opodepe is an old church, fully 250 years of age. It was once a very pretentious structure but is now in a sad state of dilapidation, although services are regularly held. The Sunday evening of my stay the bell in the crumbling belfry rang for vespers, and from all quarters women with prayer books in their hands were seen wending their way to the ruined edifice.

Sunday evening Dave O'Neill, long one of the foreman at the Creston mine at Minas Prietas, came along and I had quite a visit with him we had not met before in a couple of years. He had been foreman at the Picacho mine in the

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